

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

1. (Currently amended) A method of developing an exposed resist on a processing surface of a substrate in a cup, comprising:

supporting or holding a side of the substrate opposed to the processing ~~substrate~~ surface, ~~of the substrate~~ and supplying a developing solution to the processing surface of the substrate and the cup, or to the processing surface of the substrate;

exhausting air from a first peripheral region outside the cup ~~during progress of substantial~~ while performing a development ~~processing process~~ with the side opposed to the processing surface of the substrate held; and

exhausting air from a second peripheral region inside the cup, or from the second peripheral region and the first peripheral region, ~~in~~ while performing a rinsing process with the substrate held in vacuum ~~adsorption~~ attachment,

wherein the steps of exhausting air are controlled so that an exhaust amount from the first peripheral region during the development process, an exhaust amount from the second peripheral region during the rinsing process, and an exhaust amount from the second peripheral region and the first peripheral region during the rinsing process, are substantially equal.

2. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 1, further comprising[[:]] varying a concentration of the developing solution filled on the substrate after supplying the developing solution to the processing surface.

3. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 1, further comprising[[:]] supporting the side opposed to the processing surface of the substrate, and then holding the side opposed to the processing surface of the substrate in vacuum ~~adsorption~~ attachment to support the side opposed to the processing surface of the substrate, in performing processing while supporting the side opposed to the processing surface of the substrate.

4. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 1, further comprising[[:]] blowing off the developing solution filled on the processing surface once, and supplying a rinsing solution when the developing solution on the processing surface of the substrate does not dry completely, in the rinsing process.

5. (Canceled)

6. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 5 1, further comprising[[:]] controlling not to vary a supply amount of gas with adjusted temperature and moisture supplied from above the substrate when an exhaust region varies in exhaust from the first peripheral region outside the cup and from the second peripheral region inside the cup.

7. (Currently amended) An apparatus ~~that develops~~ for developing an exposed resist on a processing surface of a substrate, comprising:

- a first enclosing member disposed around the substrate;
- a second enclosing member disposed around the first enclosing member;
- a supporting mechanism that is disposed inside the first enclosing member and supports the substrate;

a holding mechanism that is disposed inside the first enclosing member and holds the substrate in vacuum ~~adsorption~~ attachment; ~~and~~

an exhausting mechanism that exhausts air from a region between the first enclosing member and the second enclosing member when the substrate is supported by the supporting mechanism; and

a solution penetration preventing mechanism provided in the supporting mechanism for preventing the developing solution from entering a center portion of a surface opposed to the processing surface of the substrate, the solution penetration preventing mechanism comprising a tilting portion having a height that is lowest toward a center portion of the substrate.

8. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 7, wherein the first enclosing member is movable upwardly and downwardly.

9. (Currently amended) The apparatus according to claim 8, further comprising a developing solution supplying mechanism that supplies a developing solution to the substrate and the first enclosing member while the supporting member supports a back side of the substrate or the holding member supports the back side.

10-11. (Canceled)

12. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 7, wherein the supporting mechanism supports a plurality of portions on the side opposed to the processing surface of the substrate in point-contact or in line-contact.

13. (Currently amended) The apparatus according to claim 7, further comprising[[:]] a control mechanism that stops exhaust or decrease an exhaust amount from inside the first enclosing member during progress of development processing with the substrate supported by the supporting mechanism.

14. (Currently amended) The apparatus according to claim 7, further comprising[[:]] an exhaust mechanism that exhausts air from a region between the second enclosing member and the first enclosing member and from a region inside the first enclosing member at the same time or selectively.

15. (Currently amended) A method of supplying a processing solution to a substrate ~~to process~~ for processing in a processing chamber, comprising:

exhausting air from a first peripheral region around the substrate; and

exhausting air from a second peripheral region between the first peripheral region and the substrate and from the first peripheral region, or from the second peripheral region,

wherein an exhaust amount from the first peripheral region is set so as to be substantially larger than an exhaust amount from the second peripheral region at least while supplying the processing solution to the substrate, or during processing with the processing solution.

16-18. (Canceled)

19. (Currently amended) The method according to claim ~~18~~ 15, further comprising[[:]] setting a pressure inside the processing chamber to be substantially higher than a pressure outside the

processing chamber while a supply of gas with adjusted temperature and moisture from above the substrate ~~is not varied~~ remains constant.

20. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 15, ~~further comprising: setting~~ wherein, while processing a single sheet of the substrate, during an elapsed time between carrying the substrate in and out of the processing chamber, a period of time taken to exhaust air from the first peripheral area region around the substrate is set to be substantially longer than a period of time taken to exhaust air from the second peripheral region ~~among a time, taken to process a single sheet of the substrate, elapsing between carrying the substrate in and out of a processing chamber.~~

21. (New) A method of supplying a processing solution to a substrate for processing in a processing chamber, comprising:

exhausting air from a first peripheral region around the substrate; and

exhausting air from a second peripheral region between the first peripheral region and the substrate and from the first peripheral region, or from the second peripheral region,

wherein an exhaust amount from the first peripheral region is set so as to be substantially larger than an exhaust amount from the second peripheral region while carrying the substrate in or out of the processing chamber.

22. (New) The method according to claim 21, further comprising setting a pressure inside the processing chamber to be substantially higher than a pressure outside the processing

chamber while a supply of gas with adjusted temperature and moisture from above the substrate remains constant.

23. (New) The method according to claim 21, wherein, while processing a single sheet of the substrate, during an elapsed time between carrying the substrate in and out of the processing chamber, a period of time taken to exhaust air from the first peripheral region around the substrate is set to be substantially longer than a period of time taken to exhaust air from the second peripheral region.

24. (New) A method of supplying a processing solution to a substrate for processing in a processing chamber, comprising:

exhausting air from a first peripheral region around the substrate; and

exhausting air from a second peripheral region between the first peripheral region and the substrate and from the first peripheral region, or from the second peripheral region,

wherein a total exhaust amount representing a first exhaust amount from the first peripheral region and a second exhaust amount from the second peripheral region is set so as to be substantially constant, even when an individual exhaust amount from the first peripheral region or the second peripheral region varies.

25. (New) The method according to claim 24, further comprising setting a pressure inside the processing chamber to be substantially higher than a pressure outside the processing chamber while a supply of gas with adjusted temperature and moisture from above the substrate remains constant.

26. (New) The method according to claim 24, wherein, while processing a single sheet of the substrate, during an elapsed time between carrying the substrate in and out of the processing chamber, a period of time taken to exhaust air from the first peripheral region around the substrate is set to be substantially longer than a period of time taken to exhaust air from the second peripheral region.